

Tart Cherry Growers Expect Near Total Loss

Wisconsin's tart cherry production for 2008 is forecast at 200,000 pounds. If realized, this would be a dramatic drop from last year's 10.4 million pounds. The combination of dry conditions and a large crop last summer stressed many trees and negatively impacted bud development. In late January, a significant temperature swing, going from temperatures in the low 40's to below zero within several hours, damaged many trees. Growers also experienced a late May frost.

National tart cherry production for 2008 is forecast at 177 million pounds. This is 30 percent below production in 2007 and 33 percent below 2006 production. Michigan, the largest tart cherry producing state, is expecting a crop of 135 million pounds, 58 million pounds less than last year. Multiple spring freezes and wet weather during pollination hampered fruit set in the northwest and west central regions of the state. However, growers in southwest Michigan were more optimistic about the crop potential. Washington is expecting a tart cherry crop of 16.5 million pounds, which would be 5.0 million pounds higher than 2007. A mid-April frost in eastern Washington had a minimal impact on cherry production. Utah tart cherry production is forecast at 12.0 million pounds, down 40 percent from 2007. Producers expect reduced yields due to a late freeze, cold spring, and a cooler than normal summer. New York expects to produce 9.20 million pounds of tart cherries, 29 percent less than last year.

State	Tart Cherry Production		
	2006	2007	2008*
	Million pounds		
WI	4.5	10.4	0.2
MI	190.0	193.0	135.0
NY	10.4	13.0	9.2
OR	3.4	0.5	1.4
PA	5.2	3.5	3.0
UT	28.0	20.0	12.0
WA	22.3	11.5	16.5
US	263.8	251.9	177.3

*Forecasted. Source: USDA, NASS, WI FO